

Claims

- 1 1. A method for shipping material, comprising:
2 submitting a shipment request, said request containing shipment information;
3 generating domestic and international control characteristics;
4 accessing a delegation database to determine ownership of said control
5 characteristics;
6 automatically forwarding said control characteristics to control points;
7 automatically notifying processing parties of approvals;
8 automatically providing processing parties with documentation; and
9 storing in a database information for tracking said shipping material and auditing
10 said method.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein said shipment information further includes
2 international shipment information.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of submitting said shipment request
2 further comprises electronically providing fields for a requester to input shipping
3 information.
- 1 4. The method of claim 3 wherein said input shipping information further
2 comprises a company identifier for said requester, a company identifier for a
3 recipient, and information for fields provided for the attention of other reviewers.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising notifying requirements for export
2 controls, finance controls, hazardous material controls, sensitive material controls,
3 traffic controls, hand-carry authorizations, and security controls.

1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of automatically notifying processing
2 parties of approvals includes providing electronic mail to a plurality of persons
3 authorized to approve specific portions of said request.

1 7. The method of claim 1 comprising implementing said method through
2 application software that provides for limited programmability.

1 8. The method of claim 7 wherein said applications software comprises Lotus
2 Notes Application Technology.

1 9. The method of claim 7 wherein said applications software comprises a high
2 level program language.

1 10. A method for electronically acquiring request and authorization information
2 and documentation for the shipping of material, comprising:

3 providing an electronic database adapted to receive a shipping instruction from a
4 requester;

5 verifying said requester;

6 providing fields in said electronic database for approvals of said shipping
7 instruction;

8 notifying said requester's approving manager or approving manager designee of
9 said request for an initial approval;

10 providing for a document link within said electronic database to view said request;

11 prompting said approving manager or said approving manager designee to assign a
12 status for said request;

13 notifying next required approving manager or next required approving manager
14 designee after said initial approval;

15 prompting said requester to prepare documents for moving goods and materials to
16 a designated shipping location;

17 notifying said requester continuously via electronic mail of the status of said
18 request;
19 notifying said requester of approved request after all approvals have been granted;
20 generating shipping documentation at said requester's initiation; and
21 storing in a database information for tracking said shipment material and auditing
22 said method.

1 11. The method of claim 10 wherein verifying said requester comprises matching
2 identification of said requester to an allowed or denied requester database.

1 12. The method of claim 10 wherein notifying said requester's approving manager
2 or approving manager designee of said request for an initial approval comprises
3 notifying via electronic mail.

1 13. The method of claim 10 further comprising copying said approving manager if
2 said designee gives approval.

1 14. The method of claim 10 wherein notifying said requester's approving manager
2 or approving manager designee of said request for an initial approval further
3 comprises verifying said approving manager or said approving manager designee.

1 15. The method of claim 14 wherein verifying said approving manager or said
2 approving manager designee comprises notifying by electronic mail.

1 16. The method of claim 10 wherein providing for a document link within said
2 electronic database to view said request further provides for viewing all contents of
3 said request in its entirety.

1 24. The method of claim 10 further comprising notifying a hazardous material
2 coordinator if hazardous materials are involved in said shipment, said notification
3 performed via electronic mail.

1 25. The method of claim 24 wherein said hazardous material coordinator is
2 prompted to assign a status through said document link and edit functions.

1 26. The method of claim 10 wherein after any editing is performed to said request,
2 notification to save said request electronically delivered.

1 27. The method of claim 10 further comprising notifying said requester after said
2 request has been denied.

1 28. The method of claim 28 including automatically canceling said request
2 immediately upon receiving a disapproval.

1 29. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program
2 of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for shipping
3 material, said method steps comprising:

4 submitting a shipment request, said request containing shipment information;
5 generating domestic and international control characteristics;
6 accessing a delegation database to determine ownership of said control
7 characteristics;
8 automatically forwarding said control characteristics to control points;
9 automatically notifying processing parties of approvals;
10 automatically providing processing parties with documentation; and
11 storing in a database information for tracking said shipping material and auditing
12 said method.

1 30. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program
 2 of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for shipping
 3 material, said method steps comprising:
 4 providing an electronic database adapted to receive a shipping instruction from a
 5 requester;
 6 verifying said requester;
 7 providing fields in said electronic database for approvals of said shipping
 8 instruction;
 9 notifying said requester's approving manager or approving manager designee of
 10 said request for an initial approval;
 11 providing for a document link within said electronic database to view said request;
 12 prompting said approving manager or said approving manager designee to assign a
 13 status for said request;
 14 notifying next required approving manager or next required approving manager
 15 designee after said initial approval;
 16 prompting said requester to prepare documents for moving goods and materials to
 17 a designated shipping location;
 18 notifying said requester continuously via electronic mail of the status of said
 19 request;
 20 notifying said requester of approved request after all approvals have been granted;
 21 generating shipping documentation at said requester's initiation; and
 22 storing in a database information for tracking said shipment material and auditing
 23 said method.

1 31. A system for coordinating and approving shipping information for the shipment
 2 of goods and materials, said system comprising:
 3 a server having central computer processing capabilities, adapted to perform the
 4 following functions:

5 generating domestic and international control characteristics;
6 accessing a delegation database to determine ownership of said control
7 characteristics;
8 automatically forwarding said control characteristics to control points;
9 automatically notifying processing parties of approvals;
10 automatically providing processing parties with documentation; and
11 storing in a database information for tracking said shipment and auditing said
12 method; and
13 a plurality of interactive input/output sites attached to said server for inputting and
14 reviewing shipment requests.

1 32. A system for coordinating and approving shipping requests for the shipment of
2 goods and materials, said system comprising:
3 a server having central computer processing capabilities, adapted to perform the
4 following functions:
5 providing an electronic database adapted to receive a shipping instruction from
6 a requester;
7 verifying said requester;
8 providing fields in said electronic database for approvals of said shipping
9 instruction;
10 notifying said requester's approving manager or approving manager designee
11 of said request for an initial approval;
12 providing for a document link within said electronic database to view said
13 request;
14 prompting said approving manager or said approving manager designee to
15 assign a status for said request;
16 notifying next required approving manager or next required approving manager
17 designee after said initial approval;

18 prompting said requester to prepare documents for moving goods and materials
19 to a designated shipping location;
20 notifying said requester continuously via electronic mail of the status of said
21 request;
22 notifying said requester of approved request after all approvals have been
23 granted;
24 generating shipping documentation at said requester's initiation; and
25 storing in a database information for tracking said shipment and auditing said
26 method; and
27 a plurality of interactive input/output sites attached to said server for inputting and
28 reviewing said shipment instruction.

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